

## Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 NEA-09 ISO-00 EA-06 AID-05 PC-01 SP-02 EB-07

NSC-05 RSC-01 CIEP-01 TRSE-00 SS-15 STR-01 OMB-01

CEA-01 COME-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 PA-01 PRS-01 USIA-06 NIC-01 /090 W

----- 041545

R 021122Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY VALLETTA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5943

INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

USMISSION USNATO

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, PFOR, MT

SUBJ: PRIMIN MINTOFF'S NEW YEAR'S ADDRESS

1. PRIME MINISTER MINTOFF DELIVERED AN END-OF-THE-YEAR TELEVISION AND RADIO BROADCAST TO THE NATION DECEMBER 31. MINTOFF'S ADDRESS WAS NOT NOTABLE FOR ITS MODERATE TONE, HIS APPEAL FOR A UNITIFIED APPROACH TO MALTA'S PROBLEMS, AND FOR HIS EMPHASIS ON PRESENT AND FUTURE ECONOMIC DIFFICULTIES.

2. MINTOFF SUMMARIZED 1974 AS A DIFFICULT YEAR, BUT ADDED THAT MALTA HAD SUFFERED LESS FROM WORLDWIDE ECONOMIC PROBLEMS IN 1974 THAN MANY LARGER AND STRONGER NATIONS. TAKING CREDIT FOR THIS RESULT, HE POINTED TO VARIOUS GOM SUBSIDY, PRICE CONTROL, AND ALLOWANCE PROGRAMS WHICH HAD HELPED TO KEEP MALTA'S COST OF LIVING DOWN.

3. MINTOFF ALSO POINTED WITH PRIDE TO VARIOUS GOVERNMENT

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ACTIONS IN THE ECONOMIC SPHERE WHICH HAD RESULTED IN THE

ESTABLISHMENT OF SUCH PARA-STATAL FIRMS AS THE BANK OF VALLETTA (WHICH REPLACED THE DEFUNCT NATIONAL BANK OF MALTA), SEA MALTA, AIR MALTA, AND THE CONVERSION OF BRITISH-OWNED CABLE AND WIRELESS INTO TELE MALTA. HE ALSO CLAIMED THAT FOR THE FIRST TIME, THE MALTA DRYDOCKS WERE NO LONGER A LIABILITY AND WERE BEING RUN AT A PROFIT.

4. THE MAIN THRUST OF MINTOFF'S ADDRESS WAS AIMED AT THE PERENNIAL, AND GROWING, PROBLEM OF EMPLOYMENT (AND UNEMPLOYMENT) IN MALTA. HE ANNOUNCED THAT A NEW JOB CORPS WOULD BE FORMED TO WORK ON THE THREE SHIPYARD PROJECTS WHICH ARE EITHER PLANNED OR UNDER WAY: (A) THE MALTA POUND 18 MILLION CHINESE-FINANCED DOCK FOR LARGE TANKERS AT CORRINO; (B) THE DOLS 80 MILLION SUPER TANKER SHIPYARD PLANNED FOR KALAFRANA WITH ARAB FINANCING; AND (C) THE MALTA POUNDS 6 TO 8 MILLION DOCKYARD FOR MEDIUM SHIPS TO BE BUILT AT MARSA. THE NEW JOB CORPS, CALLED "THE ARMS OF THE MALTESE" ("DIRGHAJN IL-MALTIN"), WILL, IN EFFECT, BE A COMBINATION WORK AND TRAINING CORPS. AFTER ASSISTING IN THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE SHIPYARDS, THE CORPS MEMBERS WOULD SUBSEQUENTLY BE TAUGHT A TRADE TO WORK IN THE SHIPBUILDING ENTERPRISES THEY BUILD.

5. MINTOFF ALSO CALLED FOR UNITY AND HARD WORK AS MALTA FACES THE FUTURE. REFERRING WITH PRIDE TO THE MALESE REPUBLIC ESTABLISHED DECEMBER 13, MINTOFF EMPHASIZED THAT THE FOUNDATIONS OF THE REPUBLIC WERE BILT ON WORK AND A RECOGNITION OF THE NEED TO HELP THE SICK AND NEEDY. EVEN MORE WOULD BE REQUIRED FROM ALL IN THISH REGARD IN 1975 THAN HAD BEEN NECESSARY IN 1974.

6. ON FOREIGN AFFIRS, MINTOFF LIMITED HIMSELF TO A FEW WORDS OF PRAISE FOR THE DECEMBER 19-21 VISIT TO MALTA BY LIBYAN PRESIDENT QADHAFI, AND ANNOUNCED THAT LIBYA HAD AGREED TO ESTABLISH A JONT HOLDING COMPANY IN MALTA FOR INDUSTRIAL PROJECTS OF INTERES TO THE TWO GOVERNMENTS. WITH REGARD TO THE MEDIAN LINE, MINTOFF REPORTED THAT THE SUBJECT HAD BEEN DISCUSSED WITH QADHAFI, BUT THAT AGREEMENT HAD NOT BEEN REACHED ON THIS ISSUE. MINTOFF ADDED THAT LIBYA HAD TAKEN OPTIONS FOR THREE SUPER TANKERS FROM THE PLANNED SHIPYARD AT KALAFRANA. OTHER THAN AN APPEAL FOR PEACE IN THE MEDITERRANEAN, AND THE WORLD, MINTOFF MADE NO OTHER REFERENCES TO FOREIGN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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POLICY MATTERS.

7. COMMENT: IN THIS ADDRESS, MINTOFF CLEARLY WAS SETTING THE STAGE FOR WHAT HE SEES AS A DIFFICULT ECONOMIC YEAR AHEAD FOR MALTA. UNEMPLOYMENT AND THE COST OF LIVING PROBABLY WILL BE THE MAJOR POLITICAL PROBLEMS FOR MINTOFF IN 1975, NOW THAT HE HAS SUCCESSFULLY WRAPPED UP HIS SELF-GENERATED "CONSTITUTIONAL CRISIS" OF 1974. MINTOFF MADE AN OBVIOUS EFFORT TO COME ACROSS

AS THE MODERATE, STATESMANLIKE LEADER WHO KNOWS BEST HOW TO PILOT  
MALTA THROUGH THE TROUBLED WATERS AHEAD. IN THIS SENSE, HIS  
PERFORMANCE WAS A RATHER IMPRESSIVE ONE. MINTOFF MADE NO  
REFERENCE TO HIS SPEECH TO HIS FORTHCOMING TRIP TO IRAQ, NORTH  
KOREA AND CHINA. SMITH

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